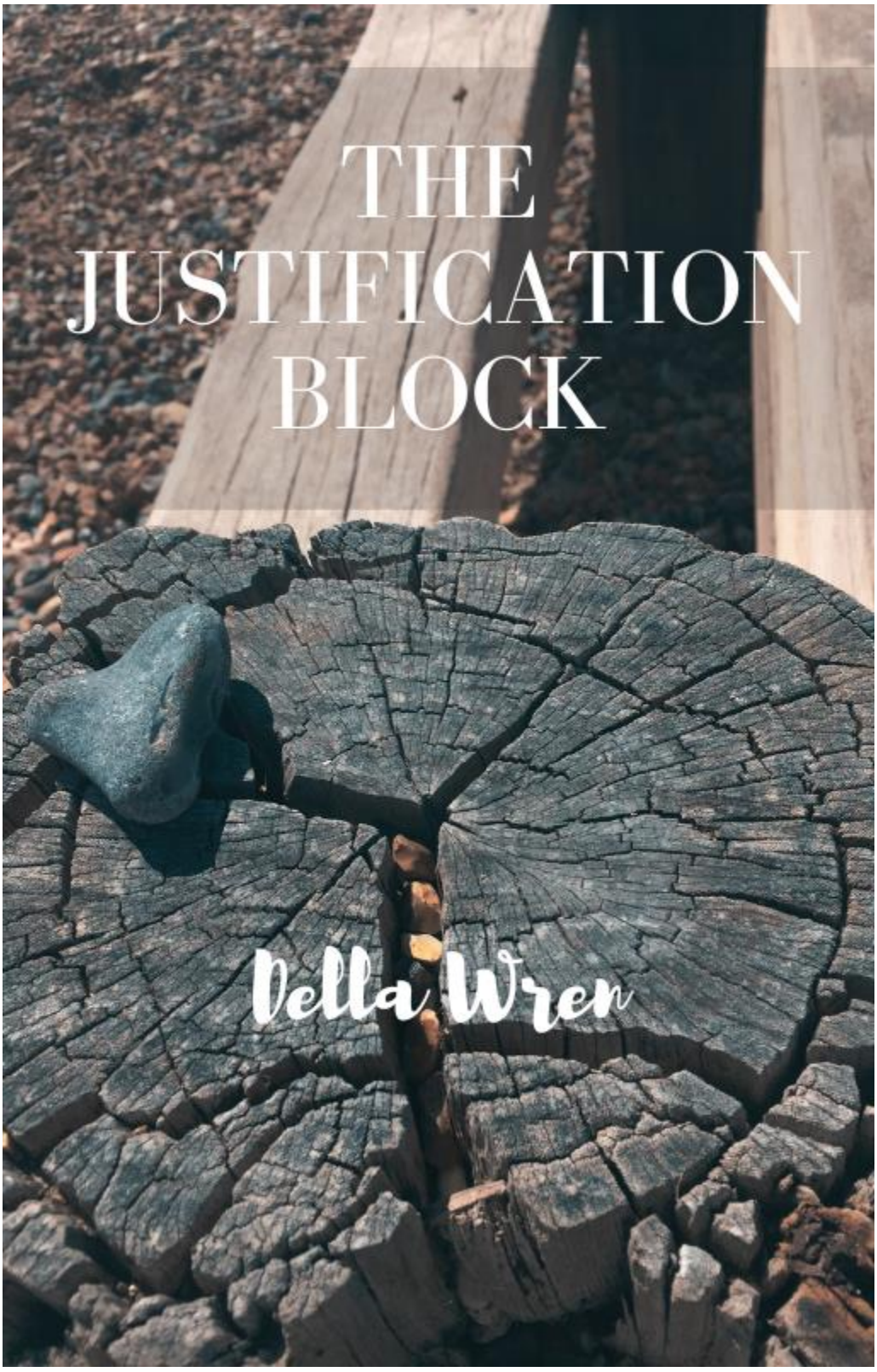
THE
JUSTIFICATION
BLOCK
Della Wren

To the stories that got me here.
Thank you.

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# The Justification Block

## The Scenario

Bad things happen. Things you don't like happen. Things you don't want to happen will happen anyway. The experiences are all out of your control. You don't have control over the external experience and it makes you mad. You want more control than you have.

What does that make you think or do? Argue with it. You try to justify the experience with the story you tell about it. You want to look for a logical explanation for the experiences you don't like. The problem with trying to do that is that it causes you to make yourself a victim of your experience. The reason why bad things are happening is because the world is crazy and you don't have control

over that. There's a sense of victimization here. There is a sense of powerlessness here. Those things keep you stuck. They make you unhappy. They don't give you many options. There is no solution found in a story that says that I'm at the mercy of my experience.

The scenario is a simple one - Something has happened that you don't like and you're telling stories about that experience in order to try to justify it. The justification stories aren't working. They are causing you pain. Here's how we get out of this corner we've found ourselves in.

## The Story You Tell

There are four general stories that we tell: blame, shame, guilt, and victimization. The two I tend to talk about most are blame and victimization because those are the two that are the most common. They are the two stories that tend to keep most people stuck in the pain that they feel. They are the stories the ego and the mind tells to keep you safe. The mind and ego want to protect you. Think about it. The mind's job is to keep the body alive, so it is going to do everything it can to make sure you are safe. The ego is the personality, but that personality is also a defense mechanism. How you show up in the world allows you to defend yourself or not. The ego protects you by making you take on pain,

knowing that the mind won't let you experience more pain if it can help it.

The mind and ego aren't bad. They aren't doing anything wrong. They are designed this way. They came with your human form on purpose and our job is to learn how to work with them. They use strategies that tend to keep us stuck more often than not. By learning how to work with the ego and the mind, we can offer them some new strategies that allow us to live life a bit more freely.

The stories of blame and victimization are the two most prominent when we talk about justifying our experience. Blaming the outside world for what's going on is an easy one. Victimizing ourselves by putting ourselves and our well-being at the mercy of the outside world is another common story to tell.

As I do with everything, I question those stories. Let's be clear - there is the experience and there is the story you tell about the experience. The experience may be that somebody stole something from you. The story you tell is one of blaming the other person for taking something important to you and then victimizing yourself by talking about how those things "always happen to you", how you can't trust anybody anymore, and how people are just awful and the world is going to hell in a hand basket. Those stories you're telling aren't true and they cause you more pain than the experience did.

Right here is where we start to argue with it. "But those things did happen!" No, they didn't. Yes, somebody took something from you but they didn't take your

sense of well-being. They didn't take your power to be okay within yourself. They didn't take your ability to trust. They didn't make that experience "always happen to you". They took a material item. You gave all the rest away with it.

The experience just is - somebody took a thing. That's it. To be honest it's a neutral experience. What makes it not neutral? How important the item was to you. How you felt about that item. Your judgment of stealing as bad or wrong. How they got the item. Did they break into your house or your car or was it just laying around somewhere? Those details affect your perception of what happened. Why? Because they create emotion. The thing is the experience is the same whether somebody steals your garbage or your favorite slippers - something was stolen. The only thing that changes is your emotion around it.

What are you actually upset about? The theft or the sentimental value of the item that was stolen? It's the latter that's actually bothering you. The theft just is, you can't change that. That's the neutral experience. The thing that upsets you is the fact that you can't change it. Why? Because that item had emotional value to you. You're grieving the loss of the item. That's not about the experience, that's your attachment to the item. Those things are different. They are separate.

We have a tendency to connect them and it's natural to want to connect them. The problem with connecting them is that it adds a layer of pain to the experience that isn't part of the original experience. Drop the story of theft and just

grieve the loss of the item. Take the experience out of it. Take the blame out of it. Drop the story you want to tell about what happened.

The reality is that if what's stolen doesn't mean anything to you, you don't care. That means the experience is neutral. If it weren't then you would be equally upset by somebody stealing junk. The idea that it doesn't work like that shows you that your attachment is to the item, not the theft itself.

Think of all the places in your life where you do this. The general experience is the same, but you react differently depending on the circumstances or the scenario. Why do you do this? Your attachment to some part of it causes you to react differently. You don't care about the hurricane until it hits your house. Why? Because of your attachment to your home. A hurricane is a hurricane. The experience doesn't really change all that much with different hurricanes. What changes is how much it affects you. That's what determines how you feel about it.

If you really cared that much about the experience of a hurricane then you'd react the same way every time regardless of whether it hit your house or a completely different country. But that's not the case. You only react when you have some attachment to it - you're in the way of it. The rest of the time, you pay no attention. These types of things are showing you that the experience is neutral. The only thing that changes is your attachment to it based on how it affects you.

That attachment is what makes you tell stories. It's what makes you create

the pain of blame, shame, guilt, and victimization. If you can see your attachment to it as separate from the experience itself, then you don't have to tell those stories anymore. Your emotional attachment to your home makes you upset when a hurricane destroys your home. Totally okay and expected! But don't blame the hurricane because it just is and you can't change it. Just allow yourself to be upset without justifying it in any way. Separate those things from each other to reduce the amount of pain you offer yourself.

Most of the pain that you feel is from your emotional attachment to the event and then the stories that you tell beyond that. The idea of managing our perception means that we have some control over how much pain we create for ourselves. But first we have to unwind the experience. We have to understand what's what and where our point of control is. Our perception of things is under our control. Our ability to contain our emotion to just the grief of whatever was lost is something else we have control over. What we can't control is the experience itself. We can't change that part, so we leave it alone. We let it be there. That leads us to the idea of acceptance. Let's talk about it.

## Accepting What Is

We can't talk about justifying the experience without talking about acceptance. What is acceptance? What does it mean to accept the experience? Does it mean I just have to roll over and give up? Does it mean I have to condone everything or put up with everything? Where is my power if I'm being asked to accept my experience? Let's sort these questions out because they are all valid and they deserve answers.

Acceptance of the experience doesn't mean we just roll over and give up. It doesn't mean that we just put up with everything or that we condone everything. Acceptance means we just understand where our power is and we give ourselves

the freedom to not argue with things we can't change. Acceptance happens after the fact once the experience is over, not before and not during.

When something happens that you don't like, your job is to learn to allow it to be there. You can't change it. You can't erase it. You may or may not be able to fix it. The experience just is at that point. There is nothing to be done about it. That means we have to move to acceptance otherwise the experience will continue to cause us pain.

When we don't accept the experience we argue with it. We decide it shouldn't have happened. We are more likely to tell the stories of blame, shame, guilt, and victimization. We get mad at the experience. We complain about it. Because we're more likely to tell stories about what happened, we're also more likely to try to justify the experience. We do that because we can't get to acceptance just yet. We need a way to be okay and justifying the experience can offer us that, at least temporarily.

Often what happens is that the justification of the experience makes us hold onto the pain. We hold a grudge. We don't let go of the anger or the resentment. We hang onto the idea that the experience shouldn't have happened or we victimize ourselves with it and decide that we didn't "deserve" what happened, like somehow we were being punished for something. We get all tangled up in these stories of pain because we're struggling to accept the experience. How do we get to

acceptance? Allow the pain to be there.

I know, I've been telling you to let go of the stories because they cause you pain and that's true. What's also true is that there was pain associated with the original experience and you have to allow that to be there. You can't be mad at how you feel. When you decide that the pain you're feeling shouldn't be there or you blame the pain on somebody else, you run into trouble. It causes you to get into a tug-of-war with your feelings that you aren't able to win.

Suddenly you aren't just arguing with the experience, now you're arguing with how the experience made you feel. That causes you to tell more stories. Now you need a justification for your feelings too. This often leads to a path of denial or outright avoidance of the whole thing. This is where we start to squish the feelings because we decide they shouldn't be there or they start to feel overwhelming. The reason they start to feel overwhelming is because you're denying them and they are asking to be felt. So they try to push at you to make you deal with them.

By dealing with them I don't mean wallowing in them. When emotions are simply felt, they start and stop. There is a beginning and an end. Emotions will not go on forever if you don't encourage them by telling stories or trying to validate them in some way. By simply allowing the emotions to be there they will go away on their own. You just have to keep your brain from making up all kinds of stuff in the meantime.

Once the emotion has been felt, it's time to go back and understand why you felt that way. It's not a story of blame that we make up. We look for what part of the experience triggered us. We understand how that relates back to the pain we were already carrying around. How does that fit into the stories we were already telling about our experience? The Universe is showing you something through this experience and your job is to find it. How do you know which experiences to use? Anything that offers pain or discomfort needs to be worked through this way.

You'll probably find the trigger pretty quickly. Your work then is to heal or deal with whatever it is you're carrying around inside of you. Acceptance is your key to this work because the goal is not to get mad at life for showing you what you need to work through. The goal is to accept that life is offering you the ability to do the work on yourself. You're just being guided in a certain direction by your life experience.

I've used my experience much the same way. I allowed life show me what I needed to deal with. What am I being offered through this experience? When I focus away from the pain that was offered to me and instead focus on my reaction to that pain, I figure out very quickly where the problem was within me. That's the thing I have control over. I can work through that and shift my behavior. How did the pain I felt change how I acted? What could I have done differently?

Don't do this in a way where you beat yourself up. What you're looking for

here is ownership. Was I offering more pain? Could I have responded more compassionately? Was I defending myself? If the answer is yes then own that; take responsibility for it and then change it. Once you become aware of what that particular experience offered you, you can take control and do something about it. Next time it shows up, you don't react the same way, you stop offering pain, and the outcome changes. That's the indirect control that we all have available to us. Yes, you can do this in integrity. It doesn't have to be manipulative.

The argument with it is probably that it is manipulation because the anger is more genuine in that moment. If you just yell and scream because that's how you feel then you're being authentic. You're "speaking your truth". So the truth is that you're an angry person that just yells and screams at everybody. That's what you want the truth to be?

The anger is a pain response. Since your truth is not the pain that you feel, the anger is not genuine. The anger is you manipulating yourself into thinking you need to feel a certain way and express it to other people when they trigger it in arguments.

There is hidden truth under the anger that you feel. Your expression of that anger, while it may in fact be genuinely how you feel in that moment, is not the truth of that experience. It is not the truth of who you are. You are not a person that goes around yelling at everybody. You are so much more than that.

You were taught not to squish your feelings like everybody else was. And what does that mean we were all taught to do? Go around expressing all those feelings at full throttle. We take our feelings out on anybody that's convenient because we were told that squishing them is not okay. Then the ego got in there and made you identify with those feelings, so now you are your feelings. Not only are you your feelings, but now speaking your truth means spreading those same feelings as far as the eye can see. This is how we've chosen to deal with life. I'm here to tell you that it doesn't work and it's not true.

Your initial reaction to something is more than likely an unconscious reaction. There is no thought in it. It is the mind interpreting your experience based on your past experience Because the mind wants to protect you, it usually interprets your experience based on previous pain. This whole thing happens on auto-pilot. You're not in control of it. You haven't had a conscious thought yet. When it's been less than 5 seconds and you're already reacting, that's an unconscious reaction. It's a preprogrammed response that isn't true. It's based on pain every single time because that's just how the mind works in its efforts to keep you safe. By the way, the pain is not true. It's just something you've identified with and held onto.

If you stopped yourself from reacting. If you didn't just spew the anger that came up initially and you allowed yourself to have a conscious thought or two, you

may be able to make a new choice to consciously respond to the situation. If you consciously responded, you wouldn't be offering anger because anger is not a conscious response. Anger is an unconscious reaction based on your own pain. You may still feel the anger but you won't project it when you are consciously responding to what's happening around you. That's the difference. An unconscious reaction is just a spewing of the emotion without conscious thought. A conscious response means the emotion may still be felt, but it is not projected outward. That doesn't mean we squish anything. You may still say "I'm angry" but there will be no yelling or screaming. There will be no lashing out. There will be no self-defense. There will just be calm and rational conversation coming from you, regardless of what the other person is doing or saying.

You say "but if I'm not expressing it then I'm squishing it". You can express anger calmly through your words. You can express any emotion the same way. You can wait until you're alone to scream into your pillow or punch a wall if you need to. You can wait to allow the full expression that you are currently trying to defend.

When emotions are managed, they don't come out like uncontrolled explosive diarrhea. Why? Because you take responsibility for how you feel and you care about the other person you're getting ready to throw your emotional poop at. What those two things do is offer you the ability to make better choices for

yourself and ultimately also the people around you. When you choose not to spew your emotions everywhere and make a conscious response, you're not squishing anything. You're offering balance into a relationship where dysfunction is currently present.

You can go scream into your pillow later. You can figure out where the anger came from later. At the end of every day you make time to manage the emotions that came up because of your experience for that day. So if there was anger, you work through that at the end of the day. If there was sadness you work through that at the end of the day. You allow the feelings to be there and you deal with them within yourself when you're by yourself.

What if you want somebody to talk to? Cool. Go do that. Do you see the difference between finding somebody to talk to about the anger you feel after the fact and spewing it at the person you're blaming for making you angry in the heat of the moment? Whether you go seek out somebody to talk to about what happened or you just deal with it within yourself later on, that's the better conscious response. That's what we're aiming for all the time.

My daily spiritual practice includes working through any emotion that may come up during the day. I don't spew my emotions around anymore. I used to do it all the time. I don't do it anymore. I see the value in not doing it because it creates a very different outcome to those situations. By not spewing my emotions, I'm

respecting the people around me even if they are not respecting me through their actions or words in that moment. I don't do this from a wounded place. I do this from a place of compassion. I understand what it's like to not have control and to need to vent and spew like that all the time. I also understand that I don't need to do that because I have other strategies now.

I'm not defending myself. I'm not making anybody earn that level of respect from me. It's just common courtesy to not be a nut case. I don't need them to prove themselves or do anything to get that from me. I give it freely. Remember: Every relationship is a choice. I get to make a choice about what to do with this relationship. I don't have to stay in this relationship if the other person doesn't want to balance. I can choose to walk away. Because I always have that choice, I have no reason to do anything other than offer compassion and kindness to people, even when my initial reaction to them is anger or upset.

How can I do that? Because I understand that people project their pain. I used to project my pain. I still do in hidden little ways sometimes. The idea of spiritual awakening or becoming conscious, however you want to say it, is to stop living from and projecting the pain we've all held onto. If none of us held onto the pain, I wouldn't need to write this. There would be no need for me. Yes, ultimately that's the goal, but for the moment many of us still walk around hanging onto a lot of pain. We spend a lot of time justifying and defending that pain because the ego

got in there and started identifying with it. That's why people like me are here. I've lived the pain and now I'm living the process of self-mastery, which is the art of understanding and managing yourself within the experience.

Justifying the experience is part of how we defend the experience. We do that because we haven't accepted it yet. We can't let it just be there yet. We still want to argue with it. We want a better explanation for it. We want that apology. We want to see that they know what they did. We want them to understand how much they hurt us. All this stuff is just a reason to hold onto the pain. It doesn't help you. You don't let it go because you think somehow that means you're okay with what other people are doing. Why do you connect the two? It's not about what the other person did. It's about how you feel now and how you're going to feel about it in a few months. It's about your ability to be okay in your own life, regardless of whether you had the experience or not. It's about you not hanging onto it. It's about allowing the pain to flow through and just accepting that the experience is what it is. You can't change it. Your job is to get okay with it and move on without taking the baggage with you.

You can accept what is or what happened when you stop arguing with it, when you stop defending it, when you stop trying to rationalize it. The problem is that you're not satisfied with "the other person was in pain". That's not a good enough reason for you and it actually probably makes you mad. Pain is a little too

non-specific isn't it? You're looking for the knife. You're looking for a reason to victimize yourself. You're looking for a reason to blame. You're looking for a story to tell. When you don't get those things from the other person, you get mad. That's all you trying to justify the experience. "See! Look! They were intentionally out to get me!" That's your justification for the experience. That's what you think you want. But why do you want that? What do you get from that?

Does it allow you to accept the experience? No! It just gives you a reason to be more mad than you already were. It gives you a reason to hang onto it longer. Justifying it becomes your excuse to carry it around with you forever. You need that because that's how you defend yourself in the future. That's your battle armor. That's your ego talking to you telling you about how the world is out to get you. That's your ego trying to do its job to protect you by using your pain to defend you.

All this does is create more pain for you. It doesn't hurt the other person. It creates your own internal hell where you're not happy because the whole world is out to get you. You defend the pain by refusing to accept the experience as just a thing that happened. You need all this other stuff to try to make yourself feel better, when all it really does is offer you never-ending pain and a reason to be unhappy.

All this stuff is in your head. None of it is out there in the world. You'll

never really know why the other person did what they did. You're asking the Universe for things that you can't have. You have to find a way to be okay from where you are. That means accepting the experience, being okay with the tiny bits of information you do have, and not making up stories that require more information than you have access to.

Your ability to accept that situation is not up to the other person. It's up to you. You have to drop your need for all the stuff you think you need that you don't have in order to do it. Nobody can do it for you. Even if that person handed you that information on a silver platter you probably still wouldn't be happy, because you wouldn't believe it anyway. Your choice to be okay is on you. It's not up to them. It has nothing to do with the reason why things happen.

I did go looking for clarity and understanding when I started this journey and I got it, but not the way you think I did. I didn't have a bunch of people come up to me and tell my why there were doing what they were doing. What I was shown was my perception and interpretation of events and how that affected my responses and reactions to what was happening in my life. The clarity I got was about myself. It wasn't about other people. My ability to be okay could not be hinged on other people. If it were I would still be miserable. My ability to be okay came from being able to accept that my responses, reactions, and perceptions were the things that were creating my reality for me. If my reality was painful that was on me. It wasn't

about anybody else.

Acceptance was one of the critical things that I had to be able to do to go on this journey of self-mastery. I had to accept the experience not only as it was, but also as my younger self chose to see it. You see, I couldn't change original perception of those events. I couldn't go back and change what happened or how my younger self reacted to it. I could shift my perception of the past event from where I am now and then begin to understand what that created for me at the time.

I learned to see the experience as it was instead of as my wounded self wanted me to see it. That was the clarity because it made me drop the need to defend myself. Your wounded self is in defense mode. That's what the wounds do. But when you get out of that what you see is that there is nothing to defend yourself against. People just do what they do. It's all just pain. Yes, even in the major trauma events or the extremes of the human experience as I sometimes call them, are people still just projecting pain. They are still just doing things or saying things that we find cruel or painful. What we do with that after the fact matters.

In the major trauma, the reaction may be just survival and that's okay. Sometimes the innate need to survive is a good thing because it keeps us alive. Your mind reacting on auto-pilot without informing you of what its doing or allowing you to make conscious choices, is okay in those extreme circumstances. In the extreme, it's not about your reaction in the moment, it's about what happens

after it's over. The extreme means you skip the step of trying to control your response in the moment. Survival is obviously paramount. And then…

What we do after the fact doesn't actually change, it just takes longer. The process remains the same. Don't tell stories. Don't attach to it. Don't identify with it. Don't blame anybody for it. Just let it be what it is. Feel the feelings that come up. Let them flow through unencumbered and eventually they will pass. If you don't get your ego in there and you don't do anything with it, the emotions will start and stop just as they are meant to.

It's just harder to do because the experience feels bigger and there is more to it. But is it really bigger? That's actually a perception thing. Not only is all experience neutral, it's also equal. The paper cut and the heart attack are the same at the Universal level. One feels bigger because it requires a lot more intervention and may change how the future looks. Because of the level of redirection the heart attack may offer, we think it is bigger. The level of redirection of a paper cut maybe rather minor, go get a bandage and keep going. Both actually redirected you, at least temporarily. Both offered you a change in direction. One you thought nothing of and the other was a whole new path. Those perceptual differences matter to us as humans, don't they? That's the perception that makes us think that one has to harder than the other. What makes you think it's bigger? You measure that by how much change it creates. But is that the important part?

I don't have the answers here. I'm actually questioning this as I write it. Where is the value in any experience? Does the experience have to be perceived as a big deal to have value? Can small experiences be really valuable even if they don't change much?

What we perceive as valuable tends to change as we get older, as we learn more, and as our lives change. What we saw as valuable as teenagers is definitely not what's valuable when you're married with a couple of kids. What you saw as valuable when you had small children is not what's valuable when you're 95 and in the last days of your life. The focus shifts and therefore so does the value in the experience.

When we perceive our experience we judge it and maybe we justify it too. Value is one of the ways we can justify our experience. If the experience was valuable, even if the experience sucked, then the justification for the experience is what you got out of it. The outcome doesn't matter. The rightness or wrongness of it doesn't matter. What matters is what you learned, how you grew, how you felt, what you thought about what happened.

How it made you feel is also irrelevant in this context. It's not because your feelings don't matter, it's because your feelings can often skew your ability to actually learn from the situation. Feeling bad about what happened doesn't make the experience less valuable. It doesn't make the experience less important or less

worthy of your attention. Your feelings become part of your justification for the experience. They become part of the story you tell. But, that doesn't make your feelings true. It just makes them a response to what happened. There is nothing wrong with that response, until it prevents you from learning from the experience.

When your emotions suck you in you get stuck in them, you wallow in them, and often you identify with them. Does that make them more true? No. Your feelings are part of your ego's reaction to what happened. They justify the ego that wants to protect you. They justify the story the mind wants to tell. What they don't do is help you understand what's happening. They are not a good way to interpret experience. They certainly are a good clue about whether the experience was positive or negative and they will give you information about what the ego and the mind want to do with the experience. But that makes it even more important that you learn to manage what happens to your experience within you.

If you don't manage what happens next you will store the extra emotion and pain in your body. Eventually that will make you sick, whether mentally, physically, or both. You can eat all the health food you want. You can exercise regularly. You can get enough sleep. You can do all the right things, but if you don't learn to manage your thoughts and emotions, you will get sick anyway. Your body hangs onto this stuff whether you want it to or not. One of the ways we can learn to manage it is by accepting what is - the experience we cannot change, while

staying out of the justification of it. The experience just is meaning we don't need to explain it or even fully understand why it happened, we just have to allow it to be there, drop the argument with it, and manage it within ourselves. That is all part of the process of acceptance. Does it happen overnight? Of course not. The better you get at learning how to do this, the quicker it will happen. Practice does in fact make this process easier. Keep working at it. It will come.

## The Argument With It

Your justification of what happened offers you the argument with it - that is the argument. You will explain the experience through a combination of any of the 4 things: blame, shame, guilt, or victimization. Often we don't even realize we do this. Sometimes we have such a hard time accepting the experience and letting go of control that we get stuck in one of these stories and can't let go of it. Each offers a rabbit hole to get stuck in. Each offers you the ability to project it outward onto other people or focus it inward on yourself. Each gives you a variety of excuses and reasons for why things happen. None of these things is true. Why? Because they cause pain and pain is not the truth, no matter what the experience was.

Somebody says something mean and you blame them for saying it and hurting your feelings. In turn you make yourself a victim of their words or of other people in general when you realize you really don't have much control over what people say. The way you try to fix that is by taking more control over who you surround yourself with. The minute somebody says something mean to you, you quickly remove them from your life, block them on social media, and have nothing to do with them. The ego is quick to defend you and supports these types of actions fully.

The mind starts to make up the story about why they said what they said. Here comes the justification. Maybe you turn this in on yourself. "It's true. I'm a horrible person. They were right." Maybe you project it outward onto them. "They are a horrible person. Nobody who cared about me would treat me like that." Blame and victimization for the win!

The argument here is simply that they said what they said. That part is true. They did say what they said. You can't control that and you can't change it. The part you have control over is what happens next. That's the part we're ignoring right now because we're focused on the problem with what they said. Your focus on the problem with it keeps you stuck in the problem with it. Shift your focus away from them and what they said.

How did it make you feel? Like crap. Why? Because it was mean. But why

was it mean? What did it trigger inside of you? Pain. Why? Because my mom used to say stuff like that to me all the time or the kids at school used to pick on me about that or it reminded me of when this other thing happened. That's the truth of the experience right there. What the other person said triggered an old wound. That's the thing you're reacting to.

But they shouldn't have triggered it! Here's a new argument. They are not responsible for your triggers. They are only responsible for what they say and you can't control whether they take responsibility for that part or not. Your job is to now heal the trigger. Deal with the pain that came up without the stories of blame and victimization you want to tell.

The idea that they shouldn't have triggered that within you puts it out of your control. It helps you begin to justify the story. The story isn't true. They said a thing and it hurt your feelings. That's the whole story. Anything else is your judgment and justification of the experience. Stay out of that rabbit hole. Don't go there. Don't allow the mind to go there. Don't allow the ego to identify with it. Make that the thing you stay out of and focus solely on what you're doing with the feelings within yourself.

But I wouldn't have to deal with these feelings if they hadn't said that thing. Here's another argument with it. They said it. You don't have control over it. They aren't apologizing for it. They aren't going to take it back. It's done. Your job is to

deal with how you feel without adding in the stories. It's just a thing that happened. You have to accept that they are in pain and they projected that onto you. Guess what? You promptly picked it up right on queue. Not only did you pick it up you took your power away from yourself and quickly started telling stories to justify it. You made it into a big thing. Did it need to be a big thing? No, but your emotions make you think it does.

Your emotions skew your perception. They help to skew what you think and how you feel. They make you want to argue with it. They make you want to justify it. Keep your feelings contained. Don't let them creep into everything else. Allow them to be there. You don't need to beat them off with a stick or squish them at all. Allow them to be there and contain them to what they are - an emotional reaction to an experience. They don't really mean much. Don't apply meaning to them. They are simply showing you that you didn't like what the other person said. That's it. Allow that to flow through. If you do that and you don't attach anything to them, they will stop on their own. Emotions are meant to start and stop. When we keep them contained and don't attach to them, they do just that relatively quickly.

Your emotions are not a good argument because they are only a manifestation of your reaction to what happened. Don't use them to validate anything. Don't use them to justify anything. Don't use them as an argument with

anything. They are just showing you how you feel. They are a hint at what your mind and ego want to do with the experience. They are not the experience and they don't have much to do with the experience because they are probably hinged onto some other unrelated experience. They are a reflection of something from the past that you haven't dealt with yet. Figure out what that thing is and work on that. Take your focus off this new experience. It doesn't matter.

What about bigger things? New trauma is new trauma, but it is dealt with the same way over a longer period of time. Something like this you should be able to manage on the same day. Bigger things will take longer, but they still shouldn't last forever. The emotions will still come and go. The stories need to be contained. You need to accept the experience and drop the arguments with it. It will always work the same way. The process is always the same. The bigger the experience seems the more emotions there will be, the more opportunity for stories there will be, the more room to get stuck in it there will be. But regardless, if you manage it the same way, you won't have to hang onto it forever. You'll be able to let it go too.

The arguments with it help you justify and validate everything. They give you something to latch onto and identify with. The arguments keep you stuck in it. Do you need to be stuck in it? No. Do you need to argue with it? No. Do you do it anyway? Yes. Why? Because that's what you were taught to do. You've never

thought about it. You've never considered that maybe you were causing some of your own pain through how you manage and deal with your experience.

One of the things that I learned very quickly in this process was how much of my own pain I had created. I know that seems crazy. We want to blame the outside world - I certainly did. But blaming the outside world just caused pain. It didn't get me very far. I had to learn how to manage myself within the experience and that meant managing the experience within me.

I unknowingly set out on a search for the truth of my experience and it led me here. What was the truth? My interpretation of my experience was causing me more pain than the experience itself. My perception was skewed. My emotions were all over the place and out of control. Everything was building on itself and I was hanging onto that and taking it out on myself.

The people around me were genuinely trying to help me but I wasn't listening. I was too wounded to hear what they were offering me. I was too crazy to understand that I was the one that needed to shift. I needed to change. I didn't have control over other people which meant I needed to fix me. Believe me when I say that trying to force myself to relinquish the control I thought I had was a challenge because I thought I was literally going to have to roll over and just put up with everything. I didn't understand what the result would be. If I managed myself within the experience, stopped trying to control others, and learned how to

see my experience differently, the pain would stop. It wouldn't get out of control. I wouldn't suddenly be a victim to my reality. Guess what happened? It all changed.

I learned to manage myself. I learned to use my power where I had it. I learned to let experience just be there and not fight with it so much. I learned to be okay within myself more of the time and I let go of a ton of pain. Yes, that fixed it over time as people started to see that I was different. I did have to wait for my reality to catch up, which it still is.

Dropping the arguments and the justifications was life-changing for me. I learned how I was affecting my own experience. I started to see how people were reacting to me. I started to see how my reactions were creating problems I was trying to solve. I wasn't helping my own experience, so then I learned balance. I learned to not worry and not react. I learned to find my point of control and stay there. I learned to be okay within my own experience without needing it to be different. I could only do that when I dropped all the arguments and justifications. Was that easy? No, but it was worth it and you can do it too.

## Final Thoughts

The justification of it is the reason for all the arguments and stories we tell. None of it is true. The reason why we do it is because we're attempting to make ourselves feel better. It's a feeling of being out of control. When we feel out of control we start to look for a way to control things. That means we create boundaries and artificial rules or limits that keep us stuck. We spend a lot of time defending ourselves and arguing with what's happening.

We aren't ever taught that our point of control isn't outside of us - it's within us. Our power is within us. It's not out there in the world around us at all. To be able to look inside of ourselves to find our point of control, we have to accept that

we don't have control over the outside world. The outside world just is. It's a set of experiences that are happening. We get to be part of some of them. We get the opportunity to learn from them. We get the opportunity to understand ourselves better through them.

None of these concepts are difficult. The hard part is actually doing them. I had to embody and do everything I'm offering you. I couldn't just talk the talk, I had to walk the walk, which meant living my life this way. I spend time almost daily understanding myself within the experience. How am I being in the world? How is the world currently reflecting back to me? What is the world currently showing me?

I've learned where my power is and where it isn't. I understand how to use that power, not to control the external experience, but to manage my response to it. That allows me to participate in life without needing a bunch of boundaries and body armour. I don't need to protect myself anymore. I just live my life and know that I can handle what happens. I'm ready for anything now without constantly looking over my shoulder waiting for the next shoe to drop. I trust myself to handle my experience.

You can too. Work through the stories and justifications using the small things that happen in your life. Figure out how to handle that argument you just had with somebody in a way that doesn't offer you more pain. Figure out how to

get okay with the experience, allow that person to do what they do or say what they say, and then understand where you point of power is. Hint: It's not in setting up a bunch of boundaries to protect yourself. It's in understanding that you don't have control over other people. You let them do what they do and you simply handle yourself appropriately by using the power within you and focusing on that.

These are things I spent years teaching myself to do. They don't happen overnight. They take time. I used the things that were screaming the loudest and started from there. Slowly I expanded to include my past and all the big pain I had held onto for years. I got there eventually.

As I learned to use my power, I also had to allow my external reality to shift. That meant letting go of my death grip on it. I had to be okay with what happened outside of me. That meant learning to trust myself to manage things. Every time something would happen, I would make a conscious effort to manage myself. Did I do it perfectly every time? Of course not. But over time, I did learn how to handle myself better. I'm still not perfect. I probably never will be. But the imperfection gave me an opportunity to own my actions and words. By owning my behavior, I learned to apologize when I messed up whether the other person could reciprocate that or not. I learned to maintain my point of control at all times, even when it meant going back to apologize. Believe me, I don't want to apologize anymore than I have to so I've gotten pretty good at managing myself. That's how I

maintain accountability.

I haven't given myself a reason to go around being a jerk. I haven't given myself a reason to just do whatever I want because I know I'm not responsible for how other people feel. I just do the best I can every day and I commit to a practice of self-awareness that keeps me working towards my goal of balance constantly.

I've gotten good at it now, but the work doesn't stop. It continues long after you've mastered the skills. The first step in that process though is to start. Give yourself permission to start. There is nothing scary to find. There is nothing there that you haven't planted for yourself. Put the hammer down. Stop beating yourself up. Accept yourself, accept your experience, accept that life is just a set of experiences that you don't have complete control over. Get okay with it. It'll get better as you do. It takes time. Be patient with yourself. Cut yourself some slack. Give yourself some grace. If you want to get there, you can. Do the work to keep going.

Love to all.

Della